



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

March 2018

APPALACHIAN TRAIL WORK TRIP March 3 - Saturday

This work trip is designated toward clearing the 30 miles of trail between NOC and Fontana of any trees and limb debris that has fallen over the winter and prepping the trail for the upcoming thru hiker season. ATMC needs sawyers, and volunteers to assist the sawyers with removal of debris after it is cut, and repair any tread as needed where trees have fallen. Specific work locations will not be known until a walkthrough is completed in late February, and based on number of sawyers and volunteers sign up. Ideally, we would like to have 4 crews. Each crew would hike no more than 7 miles over moderate terrain. Meet at the Maryville Walmart on Hwy 411 <see list> at 7:00 am for carpooling. Drive: 110 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4.40}. Participants will need to wear sturdy footwear and bring work gloves, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. If you have a hardhat, ear protection, and/or safety glasses, please bring those as well. **Please pre-register with leaders so that appropriate tools will be available.** Alternate bad weather date is Saturday March 10. Leaders: Franklin LaFond, 678-464-3380, ox97GaMe@aol.com, and Maury Hudson, 540-629-1021, mlhowe13@gmail.com.

RICH MOUNTAIN LOOP March 4 - Sunday

We'll start the hike by parking at the Cades Cove Loop overlook and hiking the short trail to the John Oliver Cabin. From the cabin we will begin climbing (a steep climb of 1,600 feet) the Rich Mountain Loop trail to the Rich Mountain ridgeline where we will connect with the Indian Grave Gap trail. On Indian Grave we will turn right and follow that trail till it intersects with Crooked Arm Ridge trail. Then it's a downhill walk to the Oliver cabin and a few rock hops to the cars. Hike: 8.5 miles RT, rated moderate but with a steep initial climb. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive: 60 miles RT {@4¢ = \$2.40}. Leader: Steve Dunkin, jsdunkin@roaneschools.com, 829-202-3286.

WEDNESDAY HIKE: GABES MOUNTAIN TRAIL March 7 - Wednesday

This hike will take the Gabes Mountain trail past Hen Wallow Falls to Campsite 34, out & back. Hike: 9.6 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Hwy <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive: 120 miles RT to Cosby Campground {@4¢ = \$4.80}. Leader: Lloyd Chapman, lchapman6667@yahoo.com, 865-719-3769.

NEWCOMER TO HIKING WITH SMHC?

Some hints: Our 'difficulty ratings' are gauged to SMHC members with some experience with our hikes, not to the general public, nor to sometime or flatland hikers who are all likely to find our 'easy, moderate, or difficult' seem to under-rate the difficulty. Always be prepared for worse weather (wetter, colder) than expected. Wear adequate boots. Bring rainwear, water, spare food. Each carpool rider should reimburse driver about 4¢ per mile. Doubts? Call a leader.

And please note: No dogs or firearms are permitted on any Club hikes, whether inside or outside of GSMNP

Have You Paid Your Dues Yet?

This will be your last newsletter if you don't pay dues before March 15.

GIBSON GAP March 10 - Saturday

This hike will begin on the Gibson Gap Trail, also known locally as the Boy Scout Trail, in the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park. After a long traverse we will quickly climb to the top of the prominent ridge that formed such a formidable barrier to the early settlers of the region, where we will head west to connect with the Lewis Hollow Trail to return to the trailhead, forming a loop of about 10.5 miles RT, rated moderate. Meet at **Merchants Road Outback <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive: 120 miles RT {@4¢ = \$5}. Please contact the leader if you would rather meet the group at the trailhead. Leader: Brad Reese, bradktn@gmail.com, 865-599-1708.

OLD SETTLERS TRAIL March 17 - Saturday

This is a nice long roller coaster hike in the Greenbrier area that is much more pleasant in March than the summer, despite the creek crossings. We may see early signs of spring along the hike. This hike between Greenbrier and the Maddron Bald Trail showcases the history of the land before the park, with several homesites and evidence of the intense logging that went on in this area. While this is a low elevation hike, you will climb over 3900 feet by the end of this hike. You need to be able to easily hike over 10 miles for this hike. **Hiking poles are strongly suggested due to the creek crossings. Hike: 17 miles, rated difficult.** Meet at **Food City at 1219 East Parkway, Gatlinburg <see list>** ready to leave at 7:30 am for this shuttle hike. A key swap may be an option. You can email the hike leader for an elevation profile or map of the trail. Leader: Dale Potter, dalepotter55@gmail.com, 865-773-8114.

EASY HIKE: SUGARLANDS RAMBLE March 17 - Saturday

Highlights include old homesteads, abandoned roads, West Prong of the Little Pigeon River, and a cemetery. About 5 miles on old trails & roads. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:30 am or at Sugarland's Visitor Center at 9:30 am. Must carpool from Sugarland's as parking is limited. Leaders: David Smith, dcshower@gmail.com; and Ed Fleming, edwrdflm@aol.com.

SMHC Newsletter Editor: Don Dunning 865-705-2154

Send hike write-ups & photos to: dedz1@aol.com.

Please include preferred contact method (email, phone).

Visit our website: www.smhclub.org

WEDNESDAY HIKE: TWENTYMILE TRAIL March 21 - Wednesday

We will hike the Twentymile trail from Twentymile Ranger Station past Twentymile Cascade to Long Hungry Ridge trail to Campsite 92; back to Twentymile Loop trail to Wolf Ridge trail; down to Twentymile trail to the Ranger station. Hike: 9.6 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Maryville Walmart on US411 <see list>** at 8:00 am (meet at far right side of the parking lot). Drive: 78 miles RT {@4¢ = \$3.20}. Leader: Lloyd Chapman, 865-719-3769, lrchapman6667@yahoo.com.

ANAKEESTA RIDGE & CANYON OFF-TRAIL March 24 - Saturday

Most of our off-trail trips to Anakeesta Ridge focus on the dramatic, south-facing slopes and landslide scars. This time, we'll try something a little different (and longer). We'll explore the Anakeesta Canyon (i.e., the scars and cliffs on the north side). We'll enter via Alum Cave Trail and Creek, then spend a few hours frolicking in the Canyon. Depending on weather, endurance, daylight, and whimsy, we may cross over the top of the ridge and exit via the south slope and scars, or we may exit via our entrance route. Hike: 3 miles in 8 hours, rated Strenuous. Drive: 98 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4}. **Preregistration for this off-trail hike is required – please contact Greg Hoover at ghoover@cn.edu to get more info, meeting time and place.** Leaders: Greg Hoover, ghoover@cn.edu, and Greg Harrell.

PORTERS CREEK March 25 - Sunday

We will park at the Porters Creek trailhead in Greenbrier Cove. We will hike 3.4 miles to Backcountry Campsite 31 and return after eating lunch at the campsite. The hike starts out easy on a gravel road. Along the first mile there are several historical sites to include old cemeteries, the Messer Farmstead, and the former SMHC "Cabin in the Brier". Past the Messer farm the trail narrows and becomes more rugged. Fern Falls is located at the 2.7-mile mark. Hike: 7.4 miles RT, rated moderate. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive: 80 miles RT {@4¢ = \$3.20}. Side trip to SMHC cabin if desired. Leader: Steve Dunkin, jsdunkin@roaneschools.com, 829-202-3286.

BOTE MTN - JENKINS RIDGE - LAKESHORE BACKPACK March 31-April 1 – Saturday-Sunday

We will hike up the Lead Cove/Bote Mountain Trail to Spence Field then over on the AT to Jenkins Ridge (with an optional side trip to Rocky Top). We'll hike down Jenkins Ridge to Campsite 85 on Hazel Creek and camp for the night. In the morning we will hike down Hazel Creek past historic Proctor and look around a while. Then we will follow Lakeshore Trail over to Campsite 76 where the Fontana Lake Marina ferry boat will pick us up and take us to a pre-staged car. Hike: 15 miles Saturday and 15.3 Sunday, rated Difficult. Drive: 120 miles RT {@4¢ = \$5}. **Preregistration for this trip is required – please contact the leaders to get more info, meeting time and place.** Leaders: Steve Dunkin, jsdunkin@roaneschools.com, 829-202-3286; and Tim Bigelow, bigelowt2@mindspring.com, 865-607-6781.

COMING EVENTS – April 2018

7 Saturday	AT Work Trip
8 Sunday	Frozen Head Wildflower Hike
14 Saturday	Rocky Crag Off-Trail
15 Sunday	White Oak Sink
20 Friday	Photo Show
21 Saturday	Little River/Huskey Gap/Sugarlands/ Rough Creek
28 Saturday	Little Cataloochee
28-29 Saturday-Sunday	Backpack Orientation

MEETING PLACES: **Alcoa Food City** = On right between 3rd & 4th stoplight (on Hall Rd., TN 35), a block before Big Lots. [Map Link](#). **Comcast on Asheville Hwy** = From Exit 394 ramp off I-40 go left (east) on Asheville Hwy, US-11E/25W/70, to signal light at top of hill; turn right, down into Comcast lot, 5720 Asheville Hwy; park to left of entry, about 2 lanes over toward the exit end of lot. [Map Link](#). **Gatlinburg Food City** = from downtown Gatlinburg, take East Parkway (US-321, TN-73) to 1219 East Parkway, Gatlinburg, TN. [Map Link](#). **Maryville Walmart** = On Hwy 411 S between Market Pl and Legends Way, 2410 Hwy 411. Meet near fuel center. [Map Link](#). **Outback Steakhouse on Merchants Drive** = From Exit 108 off I-75, Merchants Drive, go west towards Clinton Hwy. Park in front part of large lot at Outback Steakhouse (314 Merchants Drive), near McDonalds. [Map Link](#).

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Dianne Baribeault, bari3now@gmail.com, 508-330-9295, 293 Mount Drive, #504, Sevierville, TN 37876
Mark & Cheryl Batich, mgbatich@gmail.com, 423-733-0123, 2643 Black Valley Road, Sneedville, TN 37869
Annie Brown, anniebrown88@gmail.com, 865-776-4374, 3718 Keowee Avenue, Apt H, Knoxville, TN 37919
Elsa Bryan, bryanelsa@hotmail.com, 865-966-5928, 1946 River Sound Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922
Morgan Burkhart, morganburkhart5959@gmail.com, 7823 Gleason Drive, #504, Knoxville, TN 37919
Angyln Campbell, angelyncampbell@gmail.com, 865-414-8903, 4045 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919
Kathy Manis, kmanis55@gmail.com, 865-318-5718, 1175 Gilbert Lane, Sevierville, TN 37876
Lisa Styles, StylesLisa02@gmail.com, 865-919-4451, 149 Elokwa Way, Loudon, TN 37774
Deborah Thomas, dbthomas05@gmail.com, 865-250-2865, 4729 E. McCammon Court, Maryville, TN 37804

FOR THE RECORD

Seven Islands State Park 1/1/2018

Twelve hikers including 3 visitors hiked the hills and valleys of Seven Island State Birding Park on a bitterly cold January 1, 2018. We began at the Blue Bird Barn on the Upland Trail Inner Loop where we were escorted by numerous frost flowers on each side of the trail. As we continued on this trail we came to a barricade. Being adventurous we proceed to the right along an unmarked trail hoping it would take us to the river but alas we had to turn around and trace our steps on the inner loop. By this time we had all warmed up especially our hands. We continued on a

shortcut back to the Blue Bird Barn where we got on the Seven Islands Loop Trail. About 0.7 miles in there was another barricade. We were, however, able to continue on this trail and get to our goal of the Seclusion Bend Trail. Along the French Broad River we noted a tree where beavers had been gnawing. Their work was left unfinished. At the Maple Leaf Barn, we had a quick lunch as it was so cold. Here we were fortunate to see a Bald Eagle gliding thru the light flurries into a tree to the right of the barn. Several hikers said this was the highlight of their hike. After hiking around the peninsula we passed the Kelly House and returned to our cars via the Kelly Greenway. On the way back we were pleasantly surprised to meet a member of SMHC on her first hike since surgery.

Adele Soucy & Beth Eades (Photos by Terry Martin)



Laurel Falls/Cove Mountain

1/3/2018

Yes, it was cold. About 17 degrees. But 11 warmly dressed hikers arrived at Sugarland Visitor Center to do this hike. Three hikers (Pat, Neil and Ernie) decided to go up Cove Mountain trail and down Laurel Falls trail so we could do a key swap. The other eight of us went up Laurel Falls trail and down Cove Mountain trail. Laurel Falls was spectacular with all the ice around the falls. There was still water flowing in and around the ice. Just above the falls there was a stretch of ice on the trail. Some chose to crawl up this stretch and others found enough rocks poking up through the ice to rock hop up the ice. After that stretch, the trails were in good shape. We hiked in snow most of the time but never more than an inch. Mostly it was more like a quarter of an inch. On Laurel Falls trail there were some human tracks in the snow besides ours but when we got to Cove Mountain trail there were no other human tracks but we followed what was probably coyote tracks for quite a ways. There also was some scat that looked like dog so must have been coyote. The two groups met on Cove Mountain trail at nearly the midpoint of the hike and had lunch together. It was a short lunch because when you stopped moving you got cold very fast. As we got near the bottom the temperature warmed to just above freezing which felt like a heat wave. We completed this 12.6-mile hike with 1956 ft. elevation gain in about 5.5 hours. That is moving right along. Of course the ones that went up Cove Mountain trail had an elevation gain of about 2700 ft.

Ron Brandenburg

Lead Cove, Bote Mtn & Finley Cane

1/6/2018

Six hardy hikers braved ridiculously cold temperatures to hike this short and pretty loop. It was 4 degrees Fahrenheit when we jumped from our cars and immediately headed uphill, desperately clutching our handwarmer packets. Never has a sustained uphill been so appreciated. By the time we reached the Bote Mountain trail junction we were almost warm and paused for a photograph in the bright sunshine. There was a skiff of snow and excellent winter views on the Bote Mountain trail. We encountered four

wet crossings when we scouted; blessedly they had returned to easy rock hops.

Claudia Dean and Jean Gauger



Frozen Head

1/13/2018

Seven members and two visitors braved 20° temps and snow to hike up North Old Mac, on to the fire tower, then down South Old Mac. At the beginning of our hike, we talked about the famous but highly selective and secretive Barkley Ultramarathon run in Frozen Head State Park every year in April (date is kept a secret!) which accepts only 40 runners from all over the world to run 100 miles (five 20 mile loops) in under 60 hours, both on and off trail, with only map and compass! There are eccentric rules, including a \$1.60 application fee, and the race begins when the organizer lights a Camel cigarette. To our delight, while hiking, we met a potential runner for this year's race, an ultramarathoner, who was out running in the Park in the snow! Amazing! We had some warm cider and cookies at our brief lunch pause (too cold to linger!) but this was a wonderful and enthusiastic group, despite the cold.

Diane Petrilla and Pete Berntsen



Lumber Ridge Trail/Spruce Flats Br. Manway

1/20/2018

For the second year in a row, this hike had to be re-routed because the Park roads were closed due to snow and ice. On this mild winter's day, nine members and a visitor gathered at the Townsend Wye to hike the Chestnut Top Trail out to School House Gap and back. We made the most of this "go to when the Park is closed" trail, and enjoyed the snow and views of distant Thunderhead Mountain. At School House Gap we enjoyed lunch while a couple of members played on the rope swing. Dozens of other hikers enjoyed the snow this day and it was fun to talk to both friends and strangers along the way.

Billy Heaton & Ron Blessinger

Chestnut Top

1/24/2018

It was a bit warmer this Wednesday than it was last Wednesday. About 20 degrees warmer. Twenty hikers met at the "Wye" to hike up Chestnut Top to the picnic table. The trail was clear of any ice or snow. With many hikers with different hiking speeds, the group got very spread out. Some congregated at the intersection with Schoolhouse Gap before moving to the picnic table to eat an early lunch. The first group of hikers got there at about 10:30. As we were eating lunch the sun started peeking out from the clouds. A little sunshine to warm us felt very good. By the time we headed back down the trail there was a pretty blue sky overhead. Two hikers left the group at the picnic table to do some additional hiking. Nine miles and 1724 ft. of elevation gain was not enough for them. The last hikers to return to the cars got there 45 min. after the first to arrive, but it was still early when everyone finished.

Thomas Welch



Abrams Creek

1/27/2018

Ten hikers started at Abrams Creek Ranger Station and took "the back way" to Abrams Falls. It was a great hike with only a few ups and downs. A nice walk above the creek with wonderful views and a nice lunch at the falls. A short break at BCS 17 allows us to explore the old home site stone walls and then it was off to the finish line. The rain held off so all was good.

Steve Dunkin



SAVE THE DATE: NATIONAL TRAILS DAY - JUNE 2, 2018

Please plan to join us on June 2, 2018, for our 22nd annual Appalachian Trail Workday in the GSMNP to celebrate National Trails Day. We invite you to help with important maintenance projects. Watch for registration information soon.

HIKE SUGGESTIONS FOR 2019

The SMHC Program Committee would appreciate any suggestions for hikes to include in the 2019 program. Please send your suggestions to bradktn@gmail.com.

SAFETY: OUR #1 PRIORITY

Anyone traveling in the backcountry, on a hike or a volunteer work trip, should file an itinerary with a trusted friend or family member. If there is a need for assistance due to an injury, please contact 911 or Park Dispatch at 865-436-1230.

House Resolution 1349 to amend the Wilderness Act of 1964 – *Your Action Needed!*

In March of 2017, Federal Rep Tom McClintock (R-Calif.) introduced a bill "to amend the Wilderness act to ensure the use of bicycles, wheelchairs, strollers, and game carts is not prohibited in Wilderness areas, and for other purposes" on behalf of the Sustainable Trails Coalition (STC - a mountain biking coalition based in Colorado set up specifically to support legislation to allow Wilderness mountain biking). The much larger and more representative International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) does not support H.R. 1349. Wheelchair access to Wilderness areas is already provided for by the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. The ATC, as well as many other outdoor conservation organizations, presented testimony against the passage of this bill, which would directly violate the intent of the 1964 Federal Wilderness Act, violate the National Trails System Act of 1968 (designating the A.T. as well as the P.C.T. as protected "footpaths"), and cause a major impact on the hiker experience of Wilderness areas and the A.T. Currently, the A.T. crosses 24 designated Wilderness areas (Although this bill certainly doesn't limit itself to just the A.T.; it includes all U.S. designated Wilderness!). There would be significant impact on ecosystems to allow mountain biking, trail damage and erosion, safety issues and significant maintenance issues. H.R. 1349 passed the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands on 12-13-17 and could well come up for a vote in the House this year. We have been urged by the ATC, in a recent e-mail, to call or write our Federal Representatives to voice objection to this bill. To find out your Federal House Representative's contact information, for where you live, as well as a link to an editable template letter use: <http://www.appalachiantrail.org/home/conservation/advocacy/conservation-current-issues-full-story/advocacy---current-issues/2017/12/15/new-house-bill-could-allow-mountain-bikes-in-wilderness-areas-on-the-appalachian-trail>.

Please make your voice heard!